

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Minutes
March 4, 2015

Board Attendance Record

William Dryburgh (114/125)
Katherine Ariens (36/39)
Maria Greenberg (51/55)
Paul Bigness (12/19)
John Hitzel (50/53)
Fred Pazona (34/43)
Lou Agosto (1/4)

Present

Katherine Ariens
Maria Greenberg
Paul Bigness
John Hitzel
Fred Pazona

County Representatives

Tommy Scott, Director
Maureen Broderick, Recreation Manager
Monty Rodriguez, Foreman, Parks
Bonnie Blair, Administrative Assistant II
Kelly Shoemaker, Deputy Administrator

Guests

George Bobko
Larry Jaeger

Call to Order

Vice-Chair John Hitzel called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

- It was noted that Chairman Bill Dryburgh was out of town and could not get back in time for this meeting.

▪ **Chairman announced opportunity for public input on agenda items**

- No comments.

▪ **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Katherine Ariens presented a motion, Paul Bigness seconded, for the minutes from the January regular and February Joint Workshop be approved. Unanimously approved.

▪ **Division Reports**

January and February 2015 staff reports were distributed by email to members before the meeting.

- Fred Pazona and Maria Greenberg both mentioned the increased interest in pickleball. Players are competing for the use of our facilities. Fred mentioned that this could be a revenue producing sport for the county and piggyback with other activities.
- Tommy Scott talked about the blending of lines on the outside courts
- John Hitzel spoke about staff being shown appreciation by the members of this board, "A Land Remembered", square dancing, and pickleball. Tommy Scott explained regarding John's question about Employee Appreciation and also the Employee of the Month program.
- Fred Pazona stated that the Snowbird Classic schedule has included many extra colleges looking for some practice time in the sun. Tommy Scott mentioned that there have been over 50 schedule changes with more teams arriving because of the weather up North.
- Katherine Ariens asked what was happening with softball. Tommy Scott mentioned that part of our strategic focus is to increase activity and the Quality of Life in Charlotte

County and land is being looked at for the future.

- Commissioner Doherty mentioned County goal is to increase activities for all ages.
- Paul Bigness brought up bicycling, where riders are riding on both sides of the street and sidewalks; problems have occurred.
- Katherine Ariens suggested adding the Rules of the Road for bicycles to our webpage.
- Paul Bigness feels that signage and education is the key to safe bicycle riding in our county.
- Discussion ensued.

▪ **New Business**

▪ South County Community Garden Program

- Tommy Scott mentioned we are working towards developing a program for youth in Charlotte County. Beds are reserved and participants have a contract – working towards developing a program for kids for an October start. Katherine Ariens thanked Tommy for starting this opportunity and asked if we had a facility or a class to teach gardening. Tommy indicated we do, through the Master Gardening program.
- Fred Pazona asked Larry Jaeger to come to the meeting to talk about his experiences with the Community Garden. He explained the waiting list and that once you get the plot, if you work it properly you can keep it for the next year.
- Maria Greenberg remembered that another plot was being planned. She asked if people are being told about the extension programs when they are reserving the plots.
- Commissioner Doherty mentioned that he participated in an interview with the health department; this would be outstanding to get Diane Nugent involved with this garden. Tommy Scott mentioned that a Recreation Center Community Garden was on the list of sales tax items identified.

▪ South County Pool – Reopening March 7th at 9:30 am

- Please come to tour the renovated facility and enjoy the free admittance.

▪ Insurance for Facility Rentals

- Three handouts were presented at a workshop for the BCC about our insurance requirements.
- Benchmarking was done with other cities, counties and facilities. We are also starting to catalogue how many users fell into the lists we have been using.
 - What our process should be:
 - Stay with what we have
 - Go with the recommendations
 - Go with something else
 - No insurance needed
 - Previous chart and new tool were developed with two categories; individual or another entity (everyone else).
- Discussion of the different options with the BCC and looking for a fair process.
- John Hitzel mentioned that some groups do it themselves just to cover liability.
- Tommy Scott recommended speaking to agents for your car, home, and other insurances, as the first inquiry regarding insurance premiums and on-line resources.
- Fred Pazona stated the more information we give to outside groups, the better.
- Rule will be applied to everyone consistently.

▪ Tampa Bay Rays – Spring Training

- Discussed along with the Ambassador Program (next item)
- Tampa Bay Rays – Ambassador Program
 - The Ambassador Program is a great opportunity to speak to the public at the Spring Training games. This program continuing from last year with great success.
 - Fred Pazona mentioned that this is good public relations with the community and that there are several games that will have national broadcasts.
 - Secret Shopper Program was explained – looking for volunteers
 - Pocket Calendar Schedule of the Rays Spring Training games was distributed.
- Snowbird Classic – Monty Rodriguez
 - February 14th to March 21st – 150 games or practices scheduled on three fields with 60 teams participating. Two fields at North Charlotte Regional Park and one at South County Regional Park.
 - Tommy Scott mentioned that Monty Rodriguez and his crew are doing an amazing job with keeping the fields in great condition for all these games.
- Field Trip for April – Going East
 - Harbor Heights Park
 - Deep Creek Park
 - Maracaibo
 - Harold Avenue – meeting place at 11 am.
- **Old Business**
 - Joint Meeting.
 - Paul Bigness stands by his position regarding a mooring field in Chadwick Cove; that it is a waste of county money to support people, not even from this county. Paul thinks it is a bad idea all around and many residents in the area don't like it.
 - Larry Jaeger talked about mooring fields and they are not going to make the problem go away; it is very hard to catch the violators. It's complicated legally because there are also protections for the boaters.
 - Chadwick Cove – currently working with law enforcement and Fish and Wildlife and waiting to hear the results of the pilot program. The mooring fields were talked about at the Joint Meeting so all three groups could have the same knowledge of the issues.
 - Katherine Ariens mentioned that Commissioner Deutsch wanted the mooring field to reinvent the look of his hometown. Katherine feels the inhabitants of the Cove now will not pay the monies and just move to another location. Katherine is glad we talked about this issue and we all came to the same conclusion.
 - Larry Jaeger stated he has worked on mooring fields previously and was in the Coast Guard for 38 years. Larry stated that inhabitants of Chadwick Cove are not going to go to the mooring field, they just move – it is complicated legally because is protection for the boaters.
- **Sports Council Update**
 - Maria Greenberg was not in attendance at the last meeting but will be there in two weeks.
- **Member Issues**
 - Paul Bigness talked about the offshore races and asked if we had any news. Commissioner Doherty didn't know but what he has heard sounds promising and well organized.
 - Tommy Scott stated that when we know the November dates, we will block them out on the

calendar so we don't schedule any events at that location.

- Fred Pazona requested a copy of the Blue Fin Swim Team contract to see how many lanes they are scheduled to use. He was asked to get out of the pool by the coach. Staff has spoken with the coach; Tommy will get Fred a copy of the contract. Fred would also like to see notice of swim meets so he knows which pool to go to. The road in back has been used for swim coach parking.
- Katherine Ariens thanked Community Services staff for their hard work.

▪ **Director's Report – Tommy Scott**

• **Update on Parks Master Plan**

- Steering Committee has been meeting with the consultant from Weiler Engineering who is also doing the site visits. Public meetings are planned.
- Next Steering Committee meeting is March 17th – they are moving forward
- Fred Pazona commented that the Parkside Master Plan looks very impressive.
 - Kelly Shoemaker explained the Parks Master Plan and how Parkside fits into the plan.

▪ **Citizen Input**

- George Bobko said this is a fantastic meeting – he enjoyed hearing about the gardening as he runs a community garden also in Port Charlotte Village. He talked about his above the ground garden – his simple program, no expense or cheap ... he will send us pictures of his system.

▪ **Announcements**

- None

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

CC: Commissioner Ken Doherty, District 1
Commissioner Chris Constance, District 2
Commissioner Bill Truex, District 3
Commissioner Stephen Deutsch, District 4
Commissioner Tricia Duffy, District 5
Raymond Sandrock, Administrator
Kelly Shoemaker, Deputy County Administrator